

AIR POUCH

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FROM : Embassy LUXEMBOURG

DESP. NO. 4

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

July 8, 1957

DATE

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SUBJECT: Views of Soviet Minister to Luxembourg on Shake-up in Kremlin and on Disarmament.

Together with members of the Luxembourg Government, local business and professional people, and the diplomatic corps, I invited the Soviet Minister to Luxembourg, Mr. Ivan MELNIK, to celebrate the Fourth of July at the Embassy Residence. There follows the result of a conversation between Mr. Ady Colas, a Luxembourg who is senior economic investigator of the Embassy, and Minister Melnik:

Shake-up in the Kremlin

...Q. I assume you are aware of the fact that Messrs. MALENKOV, MOLOTOV and KAGANOVICH have been ousted from the Presidium of the Communist Party and that Mr. SHEPILOV has been dismissed as a secretary of the party's Central Committee?

A. Yes, I am ...

Q. Why do you think this happened?

A. Well, as you know, these people were the last followers of Stalin. Since his death we have adopted a completely new policy. So it is only natural that those who went on "steering the old course" were finally demoted. This actually is a measure of internal policy, taken in the course of the present struggle for power between two opposing camps within the party, which doesn't affect our foreign policy.

Q. According to the newspapers an official communiqué stated that the group was accused of anti-party activity and especially of having tried to prevent an understanding between the Soviet Union and the West and of hindering peace among peoples.

A. This is true and is also the reason why they are guilty of having opposed the official party line, whose ultimate goal it is to bring about peace and friendship among all nations.

Disarmament

Q. What is your opinion about the disarmament talks presently going on at London?

A. Both parties are certainly honest as far as their intentions are concerned.

That is

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That is to say that neither of us wants war. Where we come apart, unfortunately, is on the means to adopt and the steps to take in order to prevent a war. And also on technical questions concerning the disarmament. The decision certainly lies with the United States and the Soviet Union, but all peace-loving nations, including Luxembourg, will have to contribute their share if we are to arrive at an understanding.

Comment.

I have previously reported on the fact that the Soviet Minister appears awkward and ill at ease in company. He does not speak French and has only fair German and the conversation described above was conducted in German. It should be noted that Mr. Melnik was effusive in his greetings to myself and Mrs. Christensen both when he arrived and when he left. For instance, he took my hand in both of his and warmly wished the United States health and prosperity.

An observation that perhaps should be mentioned is the fact that Mr. Melnik arrived at the reception in striped trousers and a morning coat, an outfit which he has not worn at any other diplomatic reception in Luxembourg.



William H. Christensen
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim

cc: Amembassy MOSCOW.

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